

Washington, D.C. - Congressman David Price (D-NC) today supported legislation to force the Bush administration to change direction in Iraq. The measure, which was attached to a supplemental appropriations bill, also includes Price's legislation to bring all war contractors under U.S. legal jurisdiction.

"We have supported our troops as they have performed their military mission with remarkable success," Price said. "But limited tactical military gains will not translate into long-term stability without progress toward political reconciliation and coherent governance, and that progress clearly has not occurred. We simply cannot be held hostage – indefinitely – to Iraq's political stalemate. This amendment will signal to Iraqi leaders that our involvement is coming to an end, which is perhaps the only way to motivate them to overcome sectarian differences and unite as a nation."

The withdrawal amendment to the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill (H.R. 2642) passed by a vote of 227 to 196.

Price also applauded the House for once again taking action to rein in war contractors who have operated in an environment of impunity, thereby compromising the safety and mission of our troops. The House first passed his bill, H.R. 2740, in October, but Senate Republicans and the Bush Administration have stalled efforts to pass the bill in the Senate.

"Since the war in Iraq began, private contractor personnel have committed numerous criminal acts," Price said. "Yet, many of these individuals have operated in a legal gray zone, immune from both Iraqi and U.S. law. As a result, accountability has been undercut and the credibility of our operations in Iraq has been seriously damaged. This measure will give us the tools we need to ensure that those who run afoul of the law are brought to justice."

With Price's support, the House also passed an amendment to expand the GI Bill to provide a full, four-year college education for war veterans. The amendment also would provide a 13-week extension of unemployment benefits for those workers who are unable to find a job in today's troubled economy.

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